A great effort has been
654 made to improve the exploitation of livestock; in this regard [38]
232 one must mention the stock-raising experimental center of the Service Zootechnique, the Serotherapy Center and the Farm School of Sotuba, near Bamako; the sheepfolds at El Oualadji, Nioro, and Nara; and the stallion corrals at Nioro, Ouahigouya, Mopti, Bandiagara, Gao, Bamako, and Goundam.

III. Commerce

651 The Bambara region follows the commercial regulations of
441 French West Africa. It is, in particular, subject to the customs regulations put into force November 30, 1950 (Journal officiel A.O.F., No. 2507 [French West African Official Journal]), which include a tax on merchandise of whatever origin and a customs surtax on each product coming within the framework of the international conventions to which France has subscribed.

Customs receipts for 1950 were 131,000,000 francs for the whole of the Sudan. They reveal a rather mediocre commercial traffic, definitely inferior to that of Senegal for example (3,325,000,000 francs). This is partly due to the geographic situation of the country and to the state of the means of communication, and partly to the limited resources of the region.

A. External Commerce

a. Means of Communication

439 External commerce has three outlets: Dakar, Conakry, Abidjan. It is through these outposts that the Bambara world communicates with Europe and the United States. This is why the continental isolation of the country remains a formidable impediment to outside commerce.

505 The means of communication remain very mediocre across this country so inordinately spread out. Navigable waterways are irregular. Commercial navigation is possible as follows: on the Senegal from Saint-Louis to Kayes from July to October, and up to Podor during the rest of the year; on the Niger, by steamer during the flood period and by barge the rest of the year, between Koulikoro

439 The great distances to the coasts remain an obstacle to outside commerce, for the country lacks motor power. All coal must be imported, and hydroelectric equipment is scanty.

b. Commercial Regulation

The decree 3771-SE of July 21, 1949, set the terms for importing quota goods from metropolitan France and from countries of the French Union or for importing foreign goods. The regulation of exports is set forth in the decree 2233-SE of April 19, 1950. Any merchant holding an export license may export goods. According 441 to Richard-Molard, the commercial companies financed by French and foreign capital (increasingly American) still retain the old trading mentality which seeks to wring maximum profits out of the colony without reinvesting in the country's equipment. Attempts to 414 protect the native producers resulted in the creation of cooperatives which were given certain advantages; nevertheless, the cooperatives soon ran up against the competition of the European commercial houses and were discouraged.

c. Organization

443 Trading posts and cooperatives -- Enumeration and classification of trading posts is governed by a local decree, effective as of the opening of the trading which is itself governed by a general decree. In principle, the decree fixing the location of trading posts is drawn up after consultation by the administrations of the Bamako and Kayes Chambers of Commerce.

[40] It is formally forbidden to buy products elsewhere than at these trading posts, under pain of prosecution; confiscation of goods and seizure of vehicles may even be invoked in certain cases of repeated offense.

Role of the trading posts -- The role of these trading posts is to gather together the products of a region; the choice generally falls on a large village served by a practicable road or on a railway station from which the goods may be the more easily moved out. From the administrative point of view , the trading posts facilitate keeping a

177 Finally, the breaking up of the family cell is manifest in the in-
596 creasing number of children who prefer to work as farm laborers far
241 from their home country rather than submit to the tutelage of the farming chief.

177 The economic transformation proceeds due to electrification
377 (regulation of the great falls near Conakry and those of Sotuba near
489 Bamako) and the creation, alongside the old strategic roads, of commercial roads and bridges to facilitate shipping peanuts, rice, cotton, and millet. The ports and wharfs are being put in order, the railroad network being modernized (increasing the matériel, transforming beds and embankments, repairing the tracks, installing and extending yards, improving the depots, constructing stations, buffets, hotels, cheap housing for the employees). On the Niger, improvements are being made in the river ports of Koulikoro, Ségou, Mopti, Bamako, and Gao, and, on the Senegal, of Kayes and Saint-Louis.

177 Finally, the new economy is accompanied by social accomplishments in the fields of health, education, and urbanization.

d. Chambers of Commerce

Thus, two forms of economic organization exist side by side in Bambara country: on the one hand, the traditional and artisan native organization, and, on the other, the European organization which has shattered the ancient society and has put the local economy of the country within the framework of international economy.

177 But it is perhaps in the realm of commerce that the influence
441 of European methods has been most felt, particularly in the creation of Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry.

The creation of Chambers of Commerce dates from a decree of the Governor General in 1906. Members are elected for four years and are re-eligible. They are elected by an electoral college made up of the chiefs of French or African commercial establishments. The function of these Chambers is to give the administration advice and information when requested on any question of an economic nature.

The Chambers of Agriculture and Industry have substantially the same organization as the Chambers of Commerce, but in addition they are called on by the governors to group and codify the local customs [79] and usages of an agricultural character. These reports serve as the

177 basis of judicial decisions, and the Chambers also give advice on the
444 program of agricultural improvement undertaken by the administration and the welfare societies.

In Senegal, there are Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry at Dakar, Saint-Louis, Thiès, Kaolack, and Ziguinchor; in the Sudan, at Bamako; in Guinea and the Ivory Coast, at Conakry and Abidjan.

e. Work Regulation. Unions

464 Sparsely populated, West Africa lacks manpower. A decree of October 22, 1925, and an order of the Governor General of March 29, 1926, set the conditions by which workers could be recruited and work contracts established: salary, bonus, food, lodgings, medical care . . . Individual or collective disputes between employers and employees are taken before arbitration boards presided over by a French employer and a native assistant judge.

An act of April 2, 1932, regulates the work of women and
464 children. One of March 11, 1937, organizes the trade unions, and
467 a decree of March 20, 1937, the native professional associations. Others regulate collective agreements applying to work. The National Assembly has voted the Overseas Work Code which is beginning to be applied. African unions have developed a great deal in the course of these last years; there are six African unions in the Sudan. The complexity of labor problems has led to the creation at Dakar of an office to inspect manpower problems, this office being attached to the General Bureau of Political, Administrative, and Social Affairs.

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CHAPTER 7

CULTURAL ASPECTS

I. Religion

771 One can never insist too much on the importance of religion. It governs the entire social, political, artistic, and even economic life of the country. No institution can be understood without knowing